

**FYSB federal grant award-- Support Systems for Rural Homeless Youth:
A Collaborative State and Local Demonstration**

Locally referred to as “The Iowa Rural Homeless Youth Project”

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) awarded the Iowa DHS \$200,000 for the first year of a five-year planning grant and demonstration project targeted to young people ages 16-21, in rural areas (including Tribal lands and other rural Native communities) who are approaching independence and young adulthood, but have few or no connections to a supportive, family structure or community. "Rural" is defined as any geographical area that: (a) has a population under 20,000; and (b) is located outside a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The grant stipulates the grantee will work with FYSB providers (FYSB funds Transitional Living Programs) who serve rural communities. The TLP organizations in Iowa are Foundation 2 (Cedar Rapids area), United Action for Youth (Iowa City area), and Youth and Shelter Services (Des Moines and Ames area) and all of them serve rural communities. All are participating.

The first year is purely a planning year. A State Rural Homeless Youth Planning Team has been formed of representatives from three FYSB providers, DHS, and CJPJ to identify policy issues that need to be addressed to improve services and supports for the target population. The team will also create a communication strategy and an evaluation plan, develop the implementation plan in conjunction with local stakeholders, and select one community for a demonstration project to be implemented in years two through four.

For the years 2-4, one community will be selected by the Planning Team for a demonstration project. The cities served by a FYSB provider AND small enough to be eligible are: city of Boone (Boone County, DSM Service Area); Hamilton County (Ames Service Area); city of West Liberty (Muscatine County, Davenport Service Area); city of West Branch (Cedar and Webster Counties, CR and Davenport Service Areas); city of Independence (Buchanan County, Dubuque Service Area), and city of Webster City (Hamilton County, Ames Service Area).

The Planning Phase goals, when achieved, will raise awareness of homeless youth issues and engage stakeholders in the rural communities; enhance communication between state agencies and local rural communities, leading to the coordination of existing services and creating additional supports for rural youth. Although there is a demonstration project in years 2-4, the intent of this grant is clearly to facilitate providers from child welfare and Transitional Living Programs sharing expertise and working together to improve transition for older youth in rural areas.